

**GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON DISABILITIES  
AND SPECIAL EDUCATION**

**QUARTERLY MEETING MINUTES**

**Wednesday, October 5th, 2016  
Anchorage, Alaska**

**Council Members Present:**

Jill Burkert  
John Cannon  
Anthony Cravalho  
Sandra Dehart-Mayor  
Art Delaune  
Don Enoch  
Jeanne Gerhardt-Cyrus  
Mallory Hamilton  
Maureen Harwood  
Alexis Henning  
Ursula Jones  
Elizabeth Joseph  
Christine King  
David Kohler  
Margaret Kossler  
Sara Kveum  
Banarsi Lal  
Lelia (Lucy) Odden  
Amy Simpson – Chair  
Shelly Vendetti-Vuckovich  
Maggie Winston

**Council Staff:**

Patrick Reinhart, Executive Director  
Kristin Vandagriff, Planner  
Christie Reinhardt, Program Coordinator II  
Ric Nelson, Program Coordinator I  
Lanny Mommson, Acting Research Analyst III  
Barbara Allen, Administrative Assistant II  
Ian Miner, Office Assistant II

CART Provided by Lenny DiPaolo, Peninsula Reporting  
Minutes Prepared by Paula DiPaolo, Peninsula Reporting

**Wednesday, October 5, 2016**

**INTRODUCTIONS AND COUNCIL ORIENTATION**

After a safety briefing, **Patrick Reinhart** welcomed new and existing Council members to orientation, and Council members introduced themselves.

**Patrick Reinhart** reviewed the orientation presentation with Council members and highlighted the following topics:

- Council mission and vision.
- Council responsibilities.
- Grants and projects.
- General Council information.
- Council website.
- Council member positions.
- Staff.
- Council member duties and responsibilities.
- Council duties as the DD Council, the Special Education Advisory Panel, Interagency Coordinating Council on Infants and Toddlers, and Special Education Service Agency.
- Relationship with the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority.
- Travel information.
- People first language.
- Council budget.

**CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL – 1:30 p.m.**

**Chair Simpson** convened the full Council and after roll call was taken, Council members and guests introduced themselves.

**APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

**Jill Burkert MOVED** to approve the agenda, **SECONDED** by **Don Enoch**. Hearing no objections, the motion **PASSED**.

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM THE FEBRUARY 2016 MEETING**

**John Cannon MOVED** to approve the May 2016 minutes as written, **SECONDED** by **Lucy Odden**. Hearing no objection, the motion **PASSED**.

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATIONS**

No Council members had conflicts of interest to declare at this time.

## **CHAIR'S REPORT AND COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS**

**Chair Simpson** welcomed new Council members **Elizabeth Joseph, Ursula Jones, Banarsi Lal, John Cannon, and Shelly Vendetti-Vuckovich.**

**Chair Simpson** asked Council members to review their current committee assignments. She asked that because the Council is smaller in number, please be mindful of which committee they have obligated themselves to to ensure a quorum for committee meetings.

**Patrick Reinhart** referred Council members to Article VII of the bylaws that describes the committee structure. He reminded the Council that committees must have a majority of Council members, with the intention that half of them are consumers, and after that public members may be invited to join. Public members are to be recommended by the committee chair to the Council chair who then appoints them to the committee. He also noted that public members have a vote in committee and workgroup meetings, but are not voting members of the Council. He stated that this was a bylaws change last year that they need to be mindful that they had made.

**Jeanne Gerhardt-Cyrus** asked if the bylaws had a mechanism for removing committee members for lack of meeting attendance. **Chair Simpson** stated that they will need to review the bylaws to determine that.

**Chair Simpson** stated that she will also be following up with all the committee chairs to review the public members on each of the committees.

**Chair Simpson** stated that Anastasiya Podunovich from SDS will be e-mailing a survey out to all Council members and staff to complete a survey for the executive director evaluation.

## **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

**Patrick Reinhart** reported to the Council as follows:

### **Staff Update/Changes**

- Britteny Howell has left the Council. The Trust-funded research analyst position is vacant, and **Lanny Mommsen** has been acting research analyst.
- Planner position filled by **Kristin Vandagriff**, which leaves the program coordinator II position vacant.
- All positions funded in FY '18 except the health program manager I. The ASPEN project is closing and the Health and Disability grant was not funded.
- Admin staff helping SDS Anchorage out part time.

### **Council Member Updates**

- Alex Gimarc and Representative Millett were not reappointed.
- New Council members appointed by the Governor: **Elizabeth Joseph, Ursula Jones, Shelly Vendetti-Vuckovich, Banarsi Lal, and Maureen Harwood.**

### Reports/Surveys, Etc.

- Letter to FDA on proposed ban of electric stimulation devices to treat persons with aggressive behavior.
- Letter to President's Advisory Committee on competitive and Integrated Employment.
- Letter to SSA opposing proposal to ban firearms to people on Social Security on the basis of mental listing.
- Comments to the State Board of Education regarding special education input on federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) implementation.
- State Plan submitted to the feds.
- Needs assessment for ASPEN community completed.
- Submitted federal employment grant continuation paperwork for year five.
- White paper on Smart Home technology for SDS.
- Employer survey report distributed nationally.
- Statement of Intent agreements written for the Trust.
- Wrote a support letter for Women's, Children's, and Family Health for Autism.
- Wrote and submitted Council comments to SDS/HSS for 1915(i) DD eligibility, version three of the transition plan on settings, waiver renewal application, PCA regulation changes, and lack of movement on starting the durable medical equipment reuse and recycling program.

### Trainings, Presentations, and Important Meetings

- Medicaid redesign and reform efforts with HHS, SDS, and the Trust.
- 14(c) waivers around subminimum wage employment.
- Business Employment Services Team (BEST) did a statewide webinar for federal contractors regarding disability hire requirements
- Alaska Association of People Supporting Employment (APSE) Chapter held a second national exam.
- APSE National Conference, Ric Nelson presented and received the Personal Achievement Award.
- Technology Workgroup at SDS.
- Peer Power presentations in Juneau, Anchorage, Fairbanks, and Kenai.
- Staff trained by Center for Human Development (CHD) on how to conduct Partners in Policymaking advocacy training.
- Working with CHD, Special Olympics, Hope Community Resources, and others on wellness training for persons with I/DD.
- Statewide webinar for the Microenterprise program.
- SESA Board meeting.
- Trust meetings.
- DB 101 trainings around the state.

### Impacts of 2017 Budget

- Community Development block grants restored to 2016 levels.
- Best Beginnings and early childhood funds were restored.
- Base student allotment cut, then restored, then cut again.
- \$26 million in cuts to Medicaid services in SDS.

### *Teddy Bear Picnic*

- July 23<sup>rd</sup> at Cuddy Family Park with attendance of 2,500.
- Part of a larger inclusive playground initiative.

### *Alaska Mobility Coalition (AMC) Update*

- Membership funding coming in.
- Contract with the SILC for administrative support.
- Contract with John Kern as the executive director.
- \$1 million in state match funding.
- Cadre of experts for training.
- Volunteer program for non-emergency medical transportation.

### *Upcoming Priorities*

- HSS/SDS stakeholder meetings on Medicaid reforms and cost savings.
- SDS budget reductions workgroup.
- Disability Benefit 101 going live.
- ABLE implementation.
- Trust meeting in November.
- Durable medical reuse program.
- FY '18 budget.
- State Plan public copy, annual reports, and federal reports.

## **STATE PLAN OVERVIEW**

**Kristin Vandagriff** led Council members through a review of the State Plan as follows:

### *Planning Process Summary:*

- Council member input.
- Community forums statewide.
- 45-day draft plan public comment period.
- Submitted to Administration for Community Living (ACL) on August 22<sup>nd</sup> with Council work plans.
- Still awaiting comments from ACL to incorporate into their plan.
- The final plan will be developed into a user-friendly public booklet.

### *The Five-Year State Plan:*

- Illustrates the current Alaskan landscape.
- Describes the Council structure.
- Describes how stakeholder input was gathered.
- Describes why goal areas were selected (i.e., logic model).

### *Five-Year State Plan Goals:*

1. Community inclusion, supports, and services
2. Employment

3. Early intervention
4. Education
5. Healthcare

**Federal Objective Requirements:**

Specific objective to focus on:

- Self-advocacy
- Targeted disparity population (the Council has selected a neurodevelopmental focus of autism and FASD)
- Planned DD network collaboration.

**EDUCATION COMMITTEE REPORT**

**David Kohler** provided the Education Committee report as follows:

**Education Long-Term Goal:**

*Participate in activities that lead to enhanced practices so that children and youth with disabilities will have access to appropriate qualified professionals, curriculum, inclusion, support, and resources to ensure they have the skills they need for educational success and future independence.*

**Objective 1:** Participate in collaborative initiatives and programs to improve graduation rates and post-secondary transition for students with disabilities.

- State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP)
- Investigate types of diplomas
- Collaborate with employment and training initiatives
- Support for transition activities in rural Alaska – transition camps
- Stakeholder input on the Transition Handbook
- Investigate barriers to the Alaska Performance Scholarship.

**Objective 2:** Identify and advocate for activities that enhance the training, recruitment, retention, and professional development of education professionals to meet the needs of students with disabilities.

- Suspension, expulsion, manifestation determination, and discipline
- Distance delivery and telepractice
- Enhanced use of technology
- Paraprofessional development
- Autism student teaching
- ESSA stakeholder input
- Parent involvement and advocacy.

**Objective 3:** Meet the statutorily mandated requirements as Alaska Special Education Advisory Panel (SEAP) under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and as the governing agency for the Special Education Service Agency (SESA).

- Review Annual Program Performance Report (APR) and post-schools outcome report.
- State Board of Education meetings.
- Deaf Education Board.
- Monitor restraint and seclusion compliance.
- SESA governance.
- Inclusive Practice Award.
- Alaska Statewide Special Education Conference and other conferences.

### **EARLY INTERVENTION COMMITTEE REPORT**

**Sandra DeHart-Mayor** gave the presentation for the Early Intervention Committee as follows:

#### **Early Intervention Long-Term Goal:**

*Strengthen policies and programs so that infants and toddlers with disabilities, their families, and caregivers receive appropriate early intervention services and supports.*

**Objective 1:** Assist, advise, and collaborate with statewide partners to optimize funding, program parity, and utilization of early intervention services and inclusive childcare for infants and toddlers with disabilities statewide.

- Research funding
- Collaborate with telepractice
- Research service delivery gaps
- Research billing for developmental services
- Investigate obstacles to inclusive childcare.

**Objective 2:** Increase the knowledge of professionals and families of infants and toddlers with disabilities resulting in appropriate early screenings, identifications, referrals, and interventions.

- Help Me Grow
- Collaborate on improving neurobehavioral/DD screening and treatment
- SSIP phase III
- Marketing
- Conferences.

**Objective 3:** Collaborate and coordinate to improve the number, scope, and practice of early childhood professionals.

- Research student loan forgiveness
- Collect data on job turnover and obstacles to recruitment and retention
- Advise and collaborate on workforce development activities.

**Objective 4:** Meet federally mandated requirements as Alaska's Interagency Coordinating Council for infants and toddlers with disabilities under Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

- Timely transition at age 3
- Prepare annual report for the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) and the

Governor

- Recruit and support parents
- Share information and trainings
- Participate in statewide boards.

## **EMPLOYMENT AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE REPORTER**

Lucy Odden provided the Employment and Transportation Committee report as follows:

### **Employment Long-Term Goal:**

*Alaskans with disabilities and their families will receive necessary employment services and supports needed to become competitively employed in an integrated setting.*

**Objective 1:** Legislative focus: Provide support for the implementation of Alaska state laws increasing the employment of individuals with disabilities which lead to two new or improved policies, procedures, or regulations per year.

- Monitor employment-related legislation and advocate as necessary.
- Support Employment First implementation.
- Support Alaska ABLE Act implementation.

**Objective 2:** Transition focus: Increase career pathways for youth ages 16 – 26 that will contribute to a ten percent increase in the employment rate for youth with disabilities by 2021 in integrated and competitive employment in partnership with Alaska’s P&A, UCEED, and State DD agency as well as state self-advocacy organization.

- Support Project SEARCH expansion.
- Collaborate with Job Centers, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), the Trust, Disability Law Center (DLC), UAA CHD, and Peer Power Alaska on transition.
- Hold discovery training annually with CHD.
- Partner with CHD on post-secondary options.
- Partner with Peer Power on its employment initiative.
- Collaborate with CHD and the DLC on a transition handbook.
- Monitor Department of Education and Early Development Indicator 14 data annually.
- Partner with DLC on Alaska subminimum wage activities.
- Collaborate with SDS on supported employment home and community-based services (HCBS) enhancement.

**Objective 3:** Capacity and concept focus: Work with partners to develop and implement a plan to increase the number of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities who are employed by ten percent by 2021 in integrated and competitive employment.

- Advocate for enhancement of HCBS supported employment services.
- Increase community work incentive coordinators (CWICs) in Alaska.
- Increase asset-building opportunities.
- Partner with the Trust and CHD on capacity building for providers.
- Support Employment Network Ticket-to-Work expansion.



- Provide employment resources at job fairs and conferences.
- Increase awareness of Alaska Disability Benefits 101 website.
- Support the BEST to engage employers.
- Advocate for State of Alaska hiring benchmark by 2021.
- Increase self-employment through the Trust Microenterprise grant.
- Collaborate with the Alaska Association of People Supporting Employment (ASPE) Chapter.

## **DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITY COMMITTEE REPORT**

**Jeanne Gerhardt-Cyrus** gave the report for the DD Committee as follows:

### **Community Inclusion, Supports, and Service Goal:**

*Improve service delivery to empower individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities to live and thrive in their communities with formal and informal supports and services that promote independence.*

**Objective 1:** Improve at least five policies for appropriate lifelong service access for all populations who experience intellectual and developmental disabilities and supports for their caregivers, specifically targeting Alaska's underserved population of individuals with neurodevelopmental disabilities.

- Gather and share information with the Council.
- Council participation in the FASD Workgroup quarterly.
- Council participation in the Autism Ad Hoc Committee tri-annually.
- Research barriers for working caregivers.
- Assist in bringing assistive technology to rural areas.
- Perform obligations to the Trust.
- Collaborate with the Alaska Mobility Coalition to ease transportation woes statewide.

**Objective 2:** Monitor and review at least five policies that will increase the use of person-centered practices for HCBS settings in the Alaskan service delivery system.

- Monitor, review, comment, and raise awareness in I/DD services.
- Monitor, review, comment, and raise awareness of the person-centered direction that HCBS settings are heading.

**Objective 3:** Expand Council outreach and community involvement to at least ten annual opportunities to educate and encourage support from the public on advocacy issues of importance to people who experience I/DDs.

- Inform the public on current I/DD issues.
- Communicate Council activities through the use of media outlets.
- Council participation in public activities.

**Objective 4:** Expand opportunities for individuals with I/DDs and their families to become engaged in self-advocacy and self-advocacy leadership, strengthening the state's self-advocacy

organization, and participating in at least two annual legislative advocacy efforts that improve policies and programs for persons with disabilities to include statewide coalition participation.

- Identify and fill Council vacancies.
- Provide leadership training for qualified individuals.
- Continue supporting self-advocacy statewide.
- Increase communication, collaboration, and participation in the Key Campaign.
- Develop mentorships through the Council.

### **HEALTH CARE/MEDICAID AD HOC COMMITTEE**

**Lanny Mommsen** gave the report for the Health Care Committee, including the Medicaid Ad Hoc Committee, as follows:

#### **Health Care Long-Term Goal:**

*Alaskans with disabilities will have greater access to needed health care services that will improve their quality of life.*

**Objective 1:** Provide at least ten annual trainings to individuals experiencing disabilities, direct care professionals, and caregivers regarding health promotion, safety, and/or emergency preparedness for individuals with disabilities.

- Health care/emergency preparedness presentations.
- Best practices/education materials.
- Train provider agencies on emergency preparedness.
- Research funding for adaptive physical activity workshops.

**Objective 2:** Collaborate with at least two partner agencies annually to increase the number of individuals aging with I/DDs that have appropriate support systems in place.

- Annual Aging and Disability Summit – October 12 – 14, 2016.
- Aging and Disability Coalition.
- Public events and other activities.

**Objective 3:** Actively participate in at least three state, tribal, and/or community workgroups on Medicaid reform and redesign annually.

- Billing telehealth delivery of waiver services.
- Monitor, review, and comment on statutory changes, new laws, regulations, regulation changes, policy changes, and policy developments that affect Medicaid I/DD waiver.

### **FINAL APPROVAL OF THE STATE PLAN**

**Patrick Reinhart** reminded Council members that the State Plan was submitted on August 22<sup>nd</sup>, but the Executive Committee thought it would be best if the full Council formally approve of the State Plan for the record. **Christine King MOVED** to accept the State Plan as presented, **SECONDED** by **Shelly Vendetti-Vuckovich**. Hearing no further discussion or objections, the motion **PASSED**.

### **RECESS**

The business meeting recessed at 3:44 p.m. to celebrate the passage of the ABLE Act legislation and to hear public testimony.

### **PUBLIC TESTIMONY**

Public testimony was heard and a full transcript was prepared.

**GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON DISABILITIES  
AND SPECIAL EDUCATION**

**QUARTERLY MEETING MINUTES**

**Thursday, October 6th, 2016  
Anchorage, Alaska**

**Council Members Present:**

Jill Burkert  
John Cannon  
Anthony Cravalho  
Sandra Dehart-Mayor  
Art Delaune  
Don Enoch  
Jeanne Gerhardt-Cyrus  
Mallory Hamilton  
Maureen Harwood  
Alexis Henning  
Ursula Jones  
Elizabeth Joseph  
Christine King  
David Kohler  
Margaret Kossler  
Sara Kveum  
Banarsi Lal  
Lelia (Lucy) Odden  
Amy Simpson – Chair  
Shelly Vendetti-Vuckovich  
Maggie Winston

**Council Staff:**

Patrick Reinhart, Executive Director  
Kristin Vandagriff, Planner  
Christie Reinhardt, Program Coordinator II  
Ric Nelson, Program Coordinator I  
Lanny Mommson, Acting Research Analyst III  
Barbara Allen, Administrative Assistant II  
Ian Miner, Office Assistant II

CART Provided by Lenny DiPaolo, Peninsula Reporting  
Minutes Prepared by Paula DiPaolo, Peninsula Reporting

**Thursday, October 6, 2016**

**CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL – 8:30 a.m.**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Patrick Reinhart** presented **Lucy Odden** with recognition of her service as the Council vice chair.

**Alexis Henning** announced that his month is her birthday, and she is turning 25.

**Kristin Vandagriff** announced that October is National Disability Employment Awareness Month. **Patrick Reinhart** stated that they will be receiving a proclamation from the Governor about Disability Employment Awareness Month.

**AUTISM UPDATE**

**Christie Reinhart** stated that Dr. Ron Brennan, the state's only pediatric neurodevelopmental specialist, retired on October 1<sup>st</sup>. His retirement has left a big hole in the state, and this has been one of the focuses of the Autism workgroup. Over the past couple of years, recruitment of another pediatric neurodevelopmental specialist for Alaska has yielded no results, but there is a strong lead on a pediatric neurodevelopmental specialist that may be hired in the next year by ANMC. ANMC has just broken ground on a five-story building, of which one-and-a-half stories will be a neurodevelopmental clinic. They will be doing screening and diagnosis for FASD and autism as well as treatment.

**Christie Reinhardt** stated that at the Autism Stakeholders meeting on October 4th, the group reviewed and updated their five-year plan that contains the five priority areas of:

- Screening and diagnosis
- Workforce development
- Comprehensive services across the lifespan
- Education and early intervention
- Funding and sustainability.

**Christie Reinhardt** explained that the group discussed the existing objectives and activities and brainstormed strategies to apply moving forward to achieve the goals in the above priority areas. They also discussed in-depth the wide array of projects occurring across multiple agencies statewide and considered them in their strategies.

**Christie Reinhardt** stated that one area in particular that was discussed was the move of Applied Behavioral Analysis from SDS to the Division of Behavioral Health (DBH). ABA will be covered under the Medicaid category of Early Periodic Screening, Detection, and Treatment (EPSDT) for kids under the age of 21. DBH is anticipating the new regulations will come out next year. Randall Burns, director of DBH, attended the Autism Stakeholder's meeting and provided some explanation on the delay. He and his team, along with **Maureen Harwood** from

SDS, gave a brief overview of how care coordination would look for those SDS waiver families receiving ABA or intensive active treatment through the behavioral health system. The Autism Stakeholder's group will continue to monitor how those services are braided together.

### **ALASKA HOUSING FINANCE CORPORATION**

Daniel Delfino, acting director of planning and program development at AHFC, presented to the Council as follows:

#### **Special Needs Housing Grant Program (SNHG)**

The SNHG has provided capital grants to non-profits for construction and rehabilitation activities, which serve special needs households. Typically Alaskans served through this program are persons with disabilities who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness, or are individuals that qualify as Alaska Mental Health Trust beneficiaries.

Over the past decade, this program has helped increase the stock of dedicated supportive housing. Over \$26 million has been allocated to acquire, renovate, or develop 21 distinct supportive housing facilities, which serve over 300 households across the state and are distributed through Anchorage, Fairbanks, Homer, Juneau, Seward, Soldotna, and Wasilla.

#### **Greater Opportunities for Affordable Living Program (GOAL)**

The GOAL Program provides gap funding for the development of new construction and rehabilitation of existing rental housing for low-income and senior Alaskans. GOAL subsidies are available to cover the difference between the total project costs and the identified sources of funds that will be contributed to the project. The GOAL Program is a one-stop shop through AHFC for:

- The HOME Investment Partnership Program
- The Senior Citizens Housing Development Funds
- National Housing Trust Fund
- 811 Rental Assistance
- Low Income Housing Tax Credits

Daniel Delfino then reviewed with the Council some of the funding specifics as well as types of properties funded from 2010 to the present, specifying the types of housing unit characteristics and the served populations. He also reviewed with the Council the historical production summary of rental development programs by regions of the state.

In regards to the Teacher Housing and Health Professional program, that program has lost much of its funding over the years, but still remains active at a much lesser funding amount than in years past. It is one of the programs Daniel Delfino regards as a priority for continued funding.

He encouraged Council members to contact either himself or one of the other program staff at AHFC if they have further questions, fielded comments and questions from Council members, and concluded his report.

### **INFANT LEARNING PROGRAM (ILP)**

**Maureen Harwood** stated that it is the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary for the Part C section of the law for IDEA, and she provided the Council with the historical perspective of Part C services under IDEA in the state of Alaska, noting that Alaska was providing these services in a well-established program long before the law took effect.

**Maureen Harwood** stated that prior to July 1 of this year, ILP resided within the Office of Children's Services. It moved under the umbrella of SDS because people began to realize that SDS was a better match for the program. The transition was difficult because not only did they have to adapt and conform to a new system of doing business, but they also unfortunately lost some key staff who retired. They have since been able to hire some new staff, which was a challenge given the current state of hiring within state government.

**Maureen Harwood** reported that they currently have 903 children enrolled in the program through the 17 ILPs across the state, and the richness of those 17 ILPs has remained throughout this transition.

**Maureen Harwood** highlighted the following activities as follows:

- Understanding and establishing their role as the single line of authority and the administrator of that program.
- Target goals remain the same, and they have set plans such as the State Performance Plan, Annual Report, and the State Systemic Improvement Plan.
- Reestablishing partnerships through MOUs.
- A long-term project is a regulatory packet.
- Would like to increase telehealth and improve their understanding on how telepractice can increase service delivery and improve workforce development.
- Will be looking for increased stakeholder input.

**Maureen Harwood** announced that October is National Down Syndrome Month and concluded her report.

### **STONE SOUP GROUP**

Mary Elam, executive director of Stone Soup Group, announced that they have a new program manager named Alexandra Fogarty, and they have also gotten two additional STAR coordinators.

Mary Elam reported that the STAR program this year does not offer any discretionary funds like it has in the past. The STAR services are really about DD eligibility, TEFRA, Medicaid, and helping families begin the process and find out what they are eligible for.

Mary Elam stated that Stone Soup Group has done a lot of outreach with conflict-free case management in place, and they have been working to ensure their STAR coordinators and provider agencies know how to connect families to care coordinators.

Mary Elam stated that Stone Soup Group has started a Parent-to-Parent program. It's a national program, and the concept is to train seasoned parents to support or mentor new parents. Oftentimes the matches are made based on diagnosis. Because this is a national program, they have the ability to match Alaskan families with families out of state, particularly those families that may have a child with a rare disorder.

Mary Elam stated that they have a new website, and there is a page for a community calendar that they will be posting events that are appropriate for families. She highlighted that one event will be Wrightslaw training on March 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>.

Mary Elam announced that Southcentral Foundation is opening a Ronald McDonald House within the next month or so on the ANMC campus. It will be available to families coming in from rural Alaska. Southcentral Foundation will also be offering some case management and health education to the families that will be staying on site.

### **DIVISION OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION (DVR)**

**John Cannon**, director of DVR, reviewed some of the statistical highlights of DVR for 2016 as follows:

- 3,679 individuals received services from DVR.
- \$4,372,766 was spent on direct client services.
- 1,635 new individuals applied for services; an additional 1,585 individuals received information and referral services.
- 95.5 percent of individuals receiving services were significantly disabled with multiple barriers to employment.
- 569 individuals exited the program with an average wage of \$14.38 per hour.
- 246 were student pre-applicants (ages 16 – 22) receiving Pre-Employment Transition Services.

Overview of recent DVR activities of note:

- DVR completed a Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment at the end of July.
- DVR conducted an all-day strategic planning session on 9/21/16. One of their target groups is the re-entry population.
- The final rules for implementing the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA) were announced in the Federal Register on 8/19/16. DVR staff are continuing to review the final rules to determine the needs for revisions of DVR policies and procedures as well as possible changes to Alaska Administrative Regulations.
- WIOA requires that state VR programs serve students and youth with disabilities.
- DVR is currently working with SDS, DBH, and Public Assistance on MOUs.
- An on-site planning meeting was held September 13 and 14 with representatives from six technical assistance centers to coordinate the development of a technical assistance plan for DVR to meet WIOA implementation requirements.
- School is back in session, and DVR Pre-Employment Transition Services have begun.



John Cannon fielded questions from the Council and concluded his report.

### **WOMEN'S, CHILDREN'S, AND FAMILY HEALTH (WCFH)**

Rebekah Morisse and Stephanie Wrightsman-Birch referred members of the committee to their written report and highlighted the following:

- Continue to hold outreach clinics, which are 13 clinical days of service through this state fiscal year. Communities served are Barrow, Juneau, Mat-Su, Fairbanks, and Ketchikan. Physicians are Dr. Beth Ellen Davis and Dr. William Walker.
- Dr. Brennan retired, and recruitment has not been successful in attracting a pediatric neurodevelopmental physician. Dr. Matt Hirschfeld is working on physician recruitment for the new neurodevelopmental center that will be opening at Southcentral Foundation. They are also working on supporting Dr. DeWayne Lazenby at JBER to see beneficiaries. Getting on base and licensure issues for Dr. Lazenby has slowed this process down.
- Christie Reinhardt is working on a list of neuropsychologists and psychologists who are trained in autism diagnosis.
- To expand diagnostic capacity, the Section on Women's, Children, and Family Health has entered into a contract with the University of Massachusetts to develop an online training program for primary care providers as well as psychologists to be trained to work through the diagnostic process of autism and ADHD. Although a multi-disciplinary approach is the gold standard, this will help create capacity in the interim.
- Project ECHO, a tele/video consultation model, is being explored, and they are working towards launching this model in Alaska. ANTHC, under the direction of Dr. Chris Piromalli, is launching a palliative care ECHO using the teleconferencing platform that ANTHC has installed statewide. They will be working with ANTHC to launch a pediatric neurodevelopmental behavioral health ECHO later this spring. They are also working with Dr. Kristen Sohl from the University of Missouri who directs the super hub for autism.

Rebekah Morisse and Stephanie Wrightsman-Birch fielded questions from the Council and concluded their report.

### **ALASKA ASSOCIATION ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES (AADD)**

Lizette Stiehr stated that AADD is an association that groups and presents one voice for providers that are doing services for the entire waiver system. It has gone from a completely volunteer organization to one that has half-time staffing. Currently Kim Champney is the president of the board, and Michael Bailey is the vice president.

Lizette Stiehr stated that current stresses on the providers include conflict-free case management, the CMS final rule on settings, Medicaid reform and redesign, and other unfunded mandates.

Lizette Stiehr announced that Lynne Seagle will be coming to Alaska to do some training around person-centered services for provider management, state staff. AADD members, care coordinators, and families. This training is sponsored by AADD, the Trust, and the Center for

Human Development, and the Alaska Training Cooperative will be handling the registration.

Lizette Stiehr stated that ANCOR, AADD's national organization, has sponsored legislation called the Disability Community Act of 2016. There are sponsors in the House, and this legislation would ask the federal government FMAP at 90 percent for three years for individuals with I/DD waivers.

Lizette stated that the Trust is taking on an I/DD system analysis. There are a number of aims and goals that AADD has within that looking at national trends and then being able to see the resulting economic impact.

Lizette Stiehr fielded questions from Council members and concluded her presentation.

### **ALASKA MENTAL HEALTH TRUST AUTHORITY**

Jeff Jessee stated that the Trustees have set two overriding priorities for the Trust, Medicaid Reform and Criminal Justice Reform.

#### **Medicaid Reform**

Jeff Jessee stated that the Medicaid program as it exists is unsustainable, so the challenge is to work together with the Department and the legislature to reform Medicaid in a way that makes it sustainable over time. SB 74 was the vehicle last year to accomplish this. The bill is extremely complex, and there are 16 distinct threads that come out of it, 14 of which involve behavioral health. The Trustees are very supportive of the Trust funding the infrastructure to materialize the threads coming from this bill, and they have committed about \$10 million over three years to fund the infrastructure of the Medicaid Reform Project. This also required some significant restructuring of the Trust budget.

As a result of this budget restructuring, the Trust will continue on in their current focus areas, and with stakeholder input, determined which programs to discontinue or reduce.

#### **Criminal Justice Reform**

Jeff Jessee reminded Council members that 60 percent of the inmates in Corrections are Trust beneficiaries, so the Trust is very focused on assisting with criminal justice reform. He shared some information on what data currently shows for misdemeanants being in jail and their future outcomes. He noted that a more robust pretrial system is an area where reforms to that particular portion of Corrections could account for better outcomes for the beneficiary populations. Creating a system where the re-entry population would be better supported by connections to services, including health care services; medication management; and housing options would also provide for better outcomes.

#### **Comprehensive Mental Health Program**

Jeff Jessee stated that for years there has been talk of a Comprehensive Integrated Mental Health

Plan, which never materialized. Now they are planning instead for a Comprehensive Mental Health Program with the recognition that the evolution of the mental health program is a process, not a destination, and they need to focus on determining the process. They will incorporate the 16 strategies of Medicaid reform in to developing a Comprehensive Mental Health Program.

Amanda Lofgren discussed the DD systems provider assessment and stated that they are in the beginning stages of this process; and at the Council's January meeting, they will have a better sense of what the Comprehensive Mental Health Program will look like.

Amanda Lofgren stated that there were significant changes to the mini-grant program this year, and applications resumed on September 1<sup>st</sup>. She noted that people provided positive feedback about the online application. They also expanded who could apply on behalf of beneficiaries, and streamlined the process and reduced a lot of the paperwork that was required.

Amanda Lofgren and Jeff Jessee both agreed that further definition needs to be explored to know which mini-grant people with FASD and traumatic brain injury should be applying for, DD or behavioral health.

### **DIVISION OF SENIOR AND DISABILITIES SERVICES**

Duane Mayes began his presentation by introducing new ILP staff Christy Knight and Theresa Rosso. He then touched on the following areas specific to the Division as follows:

#### **Budget**

Duane Mayes shared the following budget reductions:

- Alaska Affordable Heating Program has been eliminated for those individuals between the federal poverty level of 151 to 225 percent.
- Senior benefits have been reconfigured and reduced, so the highest income level benefit decreased from \$125 a month to \$76 per month.
- Public Health Nursing has been cut by 20 percent and they have eliminated 31 positions.
- Ketchikan Regional Youth Facility was closed.
- McLaughlin Youth Center reduced staff and have realized other efficiencies.
- Pioneer Homes have closed 25 beds due to staffing cuts in FY '16.
- Public Health Centers in Cordova, Fort Yukon, Galena, Haines, Seward, and Wrangell have closed.
- Fairbanks Borough Vital Statistics closed their office.
- \$203 million has been reduced from the Department's budget since FY '15.
- SDS was directed to reduce the Personal Care Attendant Program (PCA) by \$5 million, and rewrote the regulations.

Duane Mayes stated that they have also been directed to cut \$26 million of HCBS services for FY '17. As a result of this, he has created the External Workgroup, which is a collection of HCBS stakeholders to provide input as to how to accomplish this reduction, and four priorities have been identified.

### Medicaid Reform

Duane Mayes stated that as part of Medicaid Reform, DHSS/SDS looked into other options that exist within the Social Security Act as a way to refinance waiver services to decrease state dollars. The 1915(k) option is going to be utilized to refinance the PCA program to increase the federal match by 6 percent.

The other option that was considered for the state was the 1915(i) option to refinance grant services for people with I/DD, TBI, ADRD, and severe mental illness (SMI). Extensive evaluation of providing 1915(i) services to these identified populations showed an increase cost to the state of implementing these options. As a result, the State has decided to look into a mini 1915(c) waiver to refinance the I/DD grant services; for TBI, they will be moving forward with targeted case management; SMI services are looking towards a 1115 demonstration waiver; and they have yet to establish a direction for ADRD, but a Dementia Care Initiative has been formed as a vehicle to explore other options.

The Inclusive Community Choices Council (ICCC) continues to meet as they roll out the 1915(k) state plan option. Duane Mayes stated that he and his team will travel around the state in the next few months to explain these results of Medicaid reform exploration to families and stakeholders.

### Conflict-Free Care Coordination

Duane Mayes stated that as a result of direction from the feds, care coordinators are no longer co-located within agencies that provide services to people with disabilities unless they have received a rural exemption. Care coordinators now exist as independent care coordinators or as part of care coordination agencies. Care coordination agencies that meet the State's criteria are able to apply to be a part of a pilot program to receive enhanced rates to provide care coordination supervision and oversight.

### Telehealth

Duane Mayes stated that SDS received a one-time increment two sessions ago to purchase telehealth equipment. They now have videoconferencing equipment in Anchorage, Fairbanks, and Juneau to conduct all staff meetings and trainings as well as to conduct assessments and reassessments in rural Alaska. The Division is on target to have 300 telehealth reassessments by the end of this fiscal year, and it has been a tremendous help in reducing costs.

### Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC)

Duane Mayes stated that a pilot was initiated on the Kenai Peninsula funded through Trust dollars to pilot a pre-screening model for people applying for long-term support services to direct them into the right services. The pilot was successful in reducing costs to the state by several million dollars. With additional funding from the Trust, this model will be expanded to three other ADRCs in the state for the Alaskans Living Independently (ALI) waiver and the Adults with Physical and Developmental Disabilities (APD) waiver.

### External Workgroup

Duane Mayes stated that the External Workgroup is comprised of approximately 15 or so individuals representing the beneficiary boards and a variety of stakeholder organizations with a goal of creating solutions to realize the \$26 million in reductions to the HCBS budget. They have identified the following four priority areas:

1. Control day habilitation with a soft cap of 15 hours per week.
2. Pre-screening through the ADRCs.
3. Expanded use of technology.
4. Work around residential habilitation to include soft caps.

### Reductions to SDS

Duane Mayes stated that SDS has eliminated positions, particularly management positions, and they have reconfigured units and done business-lean processes.

### Deaf Services

Duane Mayes stated that Hope Community Resources has taken on providing deaf services, and they have received funding from DEED for the residential supportive housing for students that attend the Alaska State School for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. They have also received \$135,000 for the funding of a deaf navigator. He recognized Roy Scheller for stepping forward and making this commitment to the deaf community.

### IAT/ABA

Maureen Harwood explained that Intensive Active Treatment (IAT) ends in terms of the waiver for children under 21 as of December 31<sup>st</sup> of this year. The plan is for the providers that are enrolled for delivering Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) in the form of Intensive Active Treatment through Behavioral Health to be paid for the services until there are regulations in place. Any child who is Medicaid EPSDT eligible would fall into receiving ABA services from DBH instead of through the waiver under SDS. IAT will stay in the I/DD waiver for adults.

### Legislative Priorities

Duane Mayes stated that with the new members of the legislature this upcoming session, a lot of work will need to be done to educate legislators on the value of home and community-based services, and he asked that the Council join the Division in providing this education.

Duane Mayes fielded questions and comments from Council members and concluded his report.

### **CENTER FOR HUMAN DEVELOPMENT (CHD)**

Karen Ward, executive director of CHD reiterated that they are one of the mandated federal

partners under the same law as the Council. She highlighted the following activities from last year:

- 7,771 professionals and community members completed trainings.
- 30 technical reports, journal articles, or other products disseminated.
- 3,698 hours of technical assistance provided.
- 29 conference presentations, posters, and table displays disseminated.
- 545 individuals with disabilities received direct, model, or demonstration services.
- 12 long-term interdisciplinary trainees completed the LEND program.
- 67 percent of former long-term trainees are in leadership positions.
- 378 individuals completed LEND continuing education events.
- 1,344 individuals with disabilities received services from former long-term trainees.

### Training

- Received approval by the Association of Community Rehabilitation Educators for their Employment Services Course.
- The Alaska Training Cooperative trained and certified 705 Alaskan participants in Mental Health First Aid.
- LEND was refunded for five years, and fellowships for self-advocates were created.
- Last year of funding for Partners in Policymaking.
- Capacity building in autism intervention.

### Training in Progress

- Distance delivered person-centered planning course.
- Competency-based family navigator course.
- Telehealth case-based training for healthcare providers to better assess and maintain patients with autism and other developmental/neurological disorders using Project ECHO model.

### Research Highlights

- Customized wellness program for individuals with I/DD and a fitness partner.
- Alaska Safety Planning and Empowerment Network (ASPEN), funding has been discontinued. This is the last year of this project.
- TAPESTRY Program.

## **STATEWIDE INDEPENDENT LIVING COUNCIL (SILC)**

Heidi Frost stated that independent living is the idea that people with disabilities are in control of their own lives and are the best experts of their own needs, wants, and desires. It began as a grassroots concept to offer support, advocacy, and information on empowerment in obtaining independence from a peer viewpoint. Centers for Independent Living (CILs) provide peer support, information and referral, individual and systems advocacy, independent living skills, and transition. The SILC and CILs do not provide direct services. Nationally there are 403 Centers for Independent Living and 56 SILCS, which are federally mandated.

Heidi Frost stated that the SILC council members are appointed by the Governor, and they have to have a majority of people with disabilities on the board and as staff. The council has a representative from two state agencies, SDS and DVR as ex-officios. They are also considering inviting a representative from DBH to participate with the SILC as an ex-officio.

The SILC mission is that Alaskans with disabilities live independently and are fully integrated into the mainstream of society. They do that by creating the State Plan for Independent Living, which is a three-year plan that guides the goals and activities of the SILC and the CILs. The goals of the current State Plan include: Emergency preparedness, transportation, and growing independent living services statewide. They also have to monitor and evaluate their progress in the plan.

Heidi Frost stated that they are working to increase partnerships with the SILC and CILs, and they are currently doing that with emergency preparedness and emergency management by working with the Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management.

Patrick Reinhart stated that he and Heidi Frost have been discussing having a joint SILC and Governor's Council meeting in January in Juneau. He stated that now that the independent living has moved over to the Administration on Community Living and is now located under SDS, the expectation is that there would be more obvious collaboration.

Heidi Frost then discussed the committee on voter access and stated that they have been working on voter advocacy and making sure people with disabilities know that they have the right to vote, know where to go to vote, and ensure the voter experience is accessible. Sasha Manesh from Disability Law Center has been working on a grant specific to voter advocacy along with **Art Delaune** with Wall Busters and the SILC. There are also many other advocacy organizations that participate in the group.

Sasha Manesh stated that the Pew Research Center recently reported that there are more than 56 million Americans or 19 percent of the population who are living with a form of disability. Projections suggest that 35.4 million disabled Americans will be eligible to vote in the 2016 election, which is 17 percent of the electorate. 58 percent of disabled Americans voted in the 2014 mid-term election, while 63 percent of Americans without disabilities say they did the same. If people with disabilities voted at the same rate as people without disabilities, there would be approximately 3 million more voters in the United States.

Sasha Manesh stated that one of the main issues for people with disabilities voting or registering to vote is transportation. Council members discussed possible solutions for the transportation issue.

Sasha Manesh then stated that registration and education outreach is another area she has been working on. Issues that she has been working on are guardianship issues and the misconception that people assume that if they are under guardianship they cannot vote, which is incorrect. People also assume that if they have a jail record they cannot vote, which is also incorrect for those individuals convicted of a misdemeanor. Felons are also able to vote after they are discharged from parole and have re-registered to vote. Council members discussed barriers to

education and registration. One issue that was discussed was how to support family members with I/DD in voting without making the choices for the individual.

Sasha Manesh then discussed the accessibility of polling places. She directed Council members to the note card, which is a survey for people to complete at polling places to rate the accessibility of the location. She asked that everyone take one to complete on Election Day, and if there are accessibility issues at any particular location, also feel free to contact her directly so she can try to address the issue with the Division of Elections. She stated that they are also looking at disability training for returning poll volunteers.

Sasha Manesh stated that future activities she will be working on include mail-in voting as well as reaching out to the primaries to make them more accessible.

### **SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICE AGENCY (SESA)**

**Maggie Winston** provided the report on behalf of Patrick Pillai who was unable to attend the meeting due to a conflict. She directed Council members to the handout that contained information about FY '16 statistics for SESA activities and highlighted the following:

#### **FY '17 Startup Operations**

1. SESA welcomed four new staff members this year.
2. Staff had a team-building retreat on August 8, 2016.
3. For the FY '17 orientation week, Lance Smith from the Anchorage School District provided assistive technology training; and SESA staff presented sessions on technology, the SESA library, travel, purchasing procedures, and timesheet management.
4. Received the low incidence disability first quarter funding from DEED as well as the grant awards for the Alaska Autism Resource Center and the INDICATORS project.
5. The annual financial audit was conducted in September, and a presentation to the SESA board is anticipated in December.
6. FY '17 agency insurance coverage is finalized and in effect as of July 1<sup>st</sup>.
7. In the first year of their new five-year lease with Newcore Investments.
8. Staff participated in a Flying Companion Seminar as a part of risk management and safety training.
9. For staff-wide e-mail and cell phone messaging in emergency situations, an account has been set up at Remind101.com.
10. SESA coordinated two workshops in August and September on the topic of deaf blindness for the Anchorage School District and the Mat-Su School District.
11. FY'17 operations are up and running with specialists providing outreach services.

### **2017 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES**

**Art Delaune** reminded Council members of last year's successes in getting ABLE Act passed, but noted that HB 77, the disability training and ID bill for law enforcement did not pass. That bill has been re-filed.



**Art Delaune** stated that the Legislative Committee will begin convening, and he asked for suggestions from Council members for priorities. He supports the concept of the Council advocating for home and community-based services. Council members suggested the following additional legislative priorities:

- For the disability ID bill position paper, tie it to the criminal justice reform.
- Advocate for the maintenance of funding support and support for related programs that support the Employment First Initiative.
- Remain vigilant on watching for legislation that died last session to see if it resurfaces during this session.
- Continue to support the Maintenance of Effort for education funding as required by ESSA.
- Need to focus on optional Medicaid services (such as HCBS) as being the lower-cost option as opposed to mandatory Medicaid services (such as hospital and nursing home care).
- Legislative Committee work with the Trust and SDS on an updated infographic for the legislature. Utilize SDS's continuum of care infographic.

**Patrick Reinhart** discussed the concept of supported decision making in the area of guardianship. This is a concept that came from Texas that significantly revamps the guardianship laws of the state and allows for people to retain a greater degree of control over their own decision making. He will gather more information from Texas and Maryland to present to the Council. There may need to be some statutory revisions to allow for this concept to come to fruition in Alaska if the Council decides to pursue it.

**Patrick Reinhart** asked Council members for feedback about doing joint advocacy with the SILC at the January meeting. Council members provided the following feedback:

- Would it be just as useful for collaboration to take place between the Executive Committees of the two groups instead of bringing together the entire councils?
- It may be more impactful for both groups to bring the same issues to the legislature, but at different times.

### **FINAL THOUGHTS AND ADJOURN**

Council members shared their final thoughts about the meeting. **Alexis Henning MOVED** to adjourn the meeting, **SECONDED** by **Lucy Odden**. Hearing no objection, the motion **PASSED**, and the meeting adjourned at 4:33 p.m.